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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION EA-20

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 P-09 H-02 INR-08 L-04 NSAE-00
NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 INRE-00 USIE-00 RSR-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8228
INFO GUMTBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 5047
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USDEL FRANCE
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG

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SUBJ: KY FILES PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

DEPT. OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Handwritten Signature DATE 1/26/82

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH. REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☐

RELEASE DENIED ☐

PA OF FOI EXEMPTIONS

1. SUMMARY; VICE PRESIDENT KY FILED HIS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY AUGUST 4 WITH 41 VERIFIED AND 41 NOTARIZED ENDORSEMENTS FROM PROVINCIAL COUNCILORS. FOLLOWING THE FILING, KY HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT HIS HEADQUARTERS, WHERE HE CRITICIZED THIEU FOR FRAUDULENTLY OBSTRUCTING HIS CAMPAIGN AND STATED THAT HIS CANDIDACY NOW DEPENDS ON THE SUPREME COURT. END SUMMARY.

2. VICE PRESIDENT KY APPEARED AT THE SUPREME COURT LATE AFTERNOON AUGUST 4 ACCOMPANIED BY 40 PROVINCIAL COUNCILORS AND FILED HIS APPLICATION AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. DURING A SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE AT HIS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS, KY ANNOUNCED THAT HIS APPLICATION WAS SUPPORTED BY 61 CERTIFIED COUNCILOR ENDORSEMENTS AND AN ADDITIONAL 41 SEPARATELY NOTARIZED ENDORSEMENTS FROM COUNCILORS WHO HAD ORIGINALLY SIGNED FOR THIEU BUT NOW WISHED TO SWITCH TO KY.

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KY ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD ACCEPT THE DECISION OF THE SUPREME COURT ON THE VALIDITY OF HIS CANDIDACY, STRONGLY ATTACKED PRESIDENT THIEU FOR FRAUDULENTLY OBSTRUCTING HIS CANDIDACY AND TERRORIZING HIS SUPPORTERS, AND ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW COULD THE "OPPOSITION" (I.E., VCI) TRUST THIEU'S OFFERS OF FREE ELECTIONS IN VIEW OF HIS CURRENT RIGGING PRACTICES. KY STRESSED FURTHER THAT HE HELD THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILORS WHO ENDORSED HIS CANDIDACY, HINTING THAT HE MIGHT TAKE ACTION IN THE EVENT ANY SUFFER REPRISALS.

3. ANSWERING REPORTERS' QUESTIONS, KY DECLINED TO SPECIFY

HIS FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION IN THE EVENT THE SUPREME COURT REJECTED HIS CANDIDACY. HE ASSERTED THAT HE HAD NEVER ASKED THAT THE US INTERVENE IN THE MATTER OF COLLECTING ENDORSEMENTS. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY STATED THAT GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH "VERY POSSIBLY MIGHT WITHDRAW HIS CANDIDACY" IF KY COULD NOT RUN AND SUBSEQUENTLY WARNED THAT "IF THERE IS A RIGGED ELECTION WE WILL LOSE OUR COUNTRY, BUT I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT A COUP D'ETAT." KY FURTHER STATED THAT HE BELIEVED THE US DESIRES AN HONEST ELECTION AND REJECTED THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT GENERAL MINH IF HIS CANDIDACY WERE REJECTED. IN CONCLUSION, HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE WOULD FIGHT FOR HIS CANDIDACY UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE. DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE TWO PROVINCIAL COUNCILORS WHO ENDORSED KY TESTIFIED TO ALLEGED DIFFICULTIES THEY HAD ENCOUNTERED BECAUSE OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR KY.

4. FROM EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS, KY APPEARED UNUSUALLY UNCOMMUNICATIVE AND SUBJUD THROUGHOUT THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

5. WHILE SUPREME COURT EVIDENTLY ACCEPTED KY'S APPLICATION FOR THE TIME BEING, THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY IMPLY DETERMINATION OF ADMISSIBILITY. NEXT STEP IS POSTING OF SLATES OF CANDIDATES BY 1800 AUGUST 5.
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PRIORITY

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO : BANGKOK, CINCPAC FOR POLAD, DANANG,
USDEL FRANCE, VIENTIANE

FROM : Amembassy SAIGON

DATE: August 4, 1971

SUBJECT : Current Position of Organized Political Blocs on the
Presidential Elections

REF :

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. None of the political parties and other politically active organizations has as yet publicly announced its position on the coming presidential election. The following is our best estimate of the current attitudes and tendencies of such groups in South Viet-Nam, assuming there would be three principal presidential candidates: President Thieu, Vice President Ky and General Duong Van Minh. The list is confined to non-Communist elements and to groups or factions claiming an organizational base.

2. President Thieu has succeeded in lining up support for himself within most of the politically active groups in the country. Of the twenty-five blocs covered in this assessment, eleven are listed as probable backers of Thieu, and in four other cases where the leaders remain undecided or are probable supporters of Minh or Ky, Thieu has significant support in the memberships. These fifteen groups include some of the largest organized political forces in the country:

3. Probable Pro-Thieu GroupsLeadership backing:

Catholic Hierarchy
Hoa Hao: Tuong-Sang Faction
Ethnic Minorities Solidarity Movement
Khemmaranikay Association

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